

I CLAIM

1. An infant pacifier comprising:
 - (a) a guard assembly for engaging the infant's face to prevent the pacifier from being accidentally swallowed or inhaled by the infant, said guard assembly comprising a generally U-shaped body constructed from a semi-rigid material and having a front surface, a back surface, a bottom portion and a generally concave upper portion, said upper portion being constructed of a soft flexible material; and
 - (b) a nipple extending outwardly from said front surface of said guard, said nipple having an axial centerline concentric with said rounded bottom portion of said guard.
2. The infant pacifier as defined in claim 1 further including a gripping handle extending outwardly from said back surface of said guard.
3. The infant pacifier as defined in claim 1 in which said nipple includes a bulbous forward portion and a rearward open portion.
4. The infant pacifier as defined in claim 1 in which said body comprises a laminate construction comprising a first semi-rigid material and a second soft material affixed to said first semi-rigid material.

5. The infant pacifier as defined in claim 4 in which said first material comprises a substantially rigid plastic material and said second material comprises a soft, flexible silicone material.

6. An infant pacifier comprising:

(a) a guard assembly for engaging the infant's face to prevent the pacifier from being accidentally swallowed or inhaled by the infant, said guard assembly comprising:

(i) a generally U-shaped body constructed from a semi-rigid material and having a front surface, a back surface, an upper concave portion and a bottom portion; and

(ii) an overlay overlaying said upper concave portion, said overlay being constructed of a soft flexible material;

(b) a nipple extending outwardly from said front surface of said guard, said nipple having an axial centerline concentric with said rounded bottom portion of said guard; and

(c) a generally U-shaped handle extending outwardly from said back surface of said guard.

7. The infant pacifier as defined in claim 6 in which said nipple includes a bulbous forward portion and a rearward open portion.

8. The infant pacifier as defined in claim 6 in which said semi-rigid material comprises a plastic material and in which said soft, flexible material comprises a silicone.

9. The infant pacifier as defined in claim 6 in which said generally U-shaped body is provided with a pair of oppositely disposed openings.

10. An infant pacifier comprising:

(a) a guard assembly for engaging the infant's face to prevent the pacifier from being accidentally swallowed or inhaled by the infant, said guard assembly comprising:

(i) a generally U-shaped body constructed from a semi-rigid material and having a front surface, a back surface, a generally rounded bottom portion and a concave upper portion; and

(ii) a soft flexible member affixed to said concave upper portion of said body;

(b) a nipple extending outwardly from said front surface of said guard, said nipple having an axial centerline concentric with said rounded bottom portion of said guard and further includes a bulbous front portion and a rearward open portion; and

(c) a generally U-shaped handle extending outwardly from said back surface of said guard.

11. The infant pacifier as defined in claim 10 in which said guard assembly further comprises a soft flexible material over molded over said generally U-shaped body.

12. The infant pacifier as defined in claim 10 in which said generally U-shaped body is provided with a pair of oppositely disposed openings.